



## M.O.E. Policy Manual

POLICY TITLE

EVALUATING CONSTRUCTION ACTIVITIES -  
HYDROCARBON TRANSMISSION AND DISTRIBUTION  
PIPELINES CROSSING WATERCOURSES

NO.  
15-07-01

### Legislative Authority

the Ontario Water Resources Act, Section 15  
the Environmental Protection Act, Section 2, 5

### Statement of Principles

This policy provides guidelines for evaluating the potential adverse impacts of pipelines during watercourse crossings and for planning adequate mitigative measures. It is intended to aid proponents, consultants and the public in preparing plans and assessments for proposed hydrocarbon transmission and distribution pipelines, as well as to direct and guide staff of the Ministry of the Environment in reviewing environmental assessments and proposals for pipeline projects.

Detailed information on these policy guidelines can be obtained from the first of five parts of the handbook, "Evaluating Construction Activities Impacting on Water Resources: Part I. Guidelines for Construction of Hydrocarbon Transmission and Distribution Pipelines Crossing Watercourses, 1982".

#### 1. Objective of Policy

The objective of this policy is to ensure that good construction practices for transmission pipelines crossing watercourses are used and that the physical and biological integrity of Ontario's waterbodies are protected.

Information on other environmental concerns of the Ministry of the Environment for new or expanding hydrocarbon pipeline facilities proposed in Ontario is contained in this Policy Manual, under Policy No. 07-06, Ministry of the Environment Considerations for Proposed Hydrocarbon Pipeline Facilities in Ontario.

March 1, 1984

### Point of Contact

Director, Water Resources Branch

### Effective Date

March 1, 1984

## 2. Application

This policy applies to all energy-related transmission pipeline projects in Ontario. It concentrates on the watercourse crossing aspects of pipeline construction as they relate to the production of sediment.

MOE is one of the agencies responsible for reviewing proposals and applications for hydrocarbon transmission and distribution pipeline projects in the Province for either the Ontario Energy Board or the National Energy Board. This policy shall be used by MOE staff in their review and by proponents in the evaluation of impacts and the planning of mitigative measures.

## 3. Effects of Sediment on the Aquatic Environment

Short- and long-term effects of sedimentation may involve the alteration of the light, temperature and water chemistry regimes of the watercourse. As contaminated sediment may be released into the water column during trench excavation, bed disturbances should be restricted to as small an area as possible.

## 4. Impacts of Sedimentation

Input from construction-related sediment loads may have certain adverse impacts on the ecosystem and watercourse uses. Every effort should be made to reduce the extent and duration of turbid conditions and the sediment loads.

## 5. Methods of Sediment Control

Nineteen recommendations for minimizing watercourse crossing impacts are detailed in the 1982 Guidelines. The reduction of instream work time is a fundamental principle of the recommendations.

The method of stream crossing should be based on a site-specific evaluation. Water quality and water use impacts associated with watercourse crossing by transmission pipelines can be minimized by achieving:

- (a) the shortest possible construction time during the season of least disturbance to the aquatic biota and watercourse uses;
- (b) limited instream disturbance; and
- (c) immediate implementation of post-construction stabilization measures

## 6. Watercourse Sensitivity

The sensitivity of a watercourse shall be determined through pre-submission of preliminary environmental assessment information by the proponent for review by local Ministry staff and other concerned agencies.

### 6.1 Environmental Study Report (ESR)

The Ontario Energy Board usually requires a proponent to prepare an ESR which is circulated to concerned agencies for review. The sensitivity of the watercourse dictates the level of detail required in the report.

### 6.2 Sensitive Watercourses

Watercourses may be designated sensitive if there is any indication that water use will be adversely affected by short- and/or long-term impacts. Detailed information on the proposed undertaking, existing environment (pre-construction conditions), likely effects and mitigative measures should be collected for sensitive watercourses. As well, the nineteen recommendations referenced in Section 5 above should be followed.

### 6.3 Non-Sensitive Watercourses

For those watercourses which have not been designated sensitive, the same approach outlined in section 6.2 should be used but the level of detail contained in the ESR need not be as great.

7. Monitoring Requirement

Depending on the watercourse sensitivity, the Regional MOE director may require that the proponent implement a monitoring program to provide the data necessary for a quantitative assessment of the impacts of the pipeline crossing operation upon the watercourse environment.

8. Policy Implementation

The regional offices of MOE will be responsible for implementing this policy. Further detail on implementation is contained in Section 5 of Policy No. 07-06, entitled Ministry of the Environment Considerations for Hydrocarbon Pipeline Facilities in Ontario.